

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 AF-06 IO-11 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02

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FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8799

INFO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

AMEMBASSY CAPETOWN

AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM

AMEMBASSY KINSHASA

AMEMBASSY LAGOS

AMCONSUL LENINGRAD

AMEMBASSY LISBON

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY LUSAKA

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

C O N F I D E N T I A L MOSCOW 690

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, UR, AO

SUBJECT: SOVIET PRESS ON ANGOLA

1. SUMMARY. PRESS COVERAGE OF ANGOLA IS SKIMPY, BUT WHAT LITTLE THERE IS PORTRAYS THE MPLA AS THE LEGITIMATE CHOICE OF THE ANGOLAN PEOPLE. ONE REPORT CLAIMS THE NORTHERN PART OF ANGOLA HAS BEEN, IN EFFECT, COMPLETELY "LIBERATED." END SUMMARY.

2. PRAVDA (JAN 16) CARRIES A BRIEF TASS REPORT FROM LUANDA WHICH SUMMARIZES SEVERAL NEWSPAPER COMMENTARIES AS WELL AS STATEMENTS BY "POLITICAL OBSERVERS". THE GENERAL THRUST OF THESE STATEMENTS, CONFIDENTIAL

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ACCORDING TO THE TASS REPORT, IS TO DEMONSTRATE THAT

THE OAU EXPERIENCE WILL RAISE THE POLITICAL CONSCIOUSNESS OF THE ANGOLAN MASSES AND WILL, AS A RESULT, FURTHER CEMENT THE BONDS BETWEEN THE ANGOLAN PEOPLE AND THE MPLA LEADERSHIP.

3. KRASNAYA ZVEZDA (JAN 16) CARRIES A TASS REPORT FROM LUSAKA WHICH STATES THAT 5,000 SOUTH AFRICAN RESERVISTS HAVE BEEN CALLED UP IN THE LAST TWO WEEKS IN ORDER TO BACKSTOP THE REGULAR FORCES WHICH HAVE BEEN DEPLOYED OUT OF NAMIBIA INTO ANGOLA. KRASNAYA ZVEZDA ALSO CARRIES A TASS REPORT FROM LUANDA WHICH CLAIMS THAT "AS A RESULT OF THE MILITARY OPERATIONS BY THE NATIONAL ARMY OF THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF ANGOLA", THE NORTHERN PART OF THE COUNTRY HAS, IN EFFECT, BEEN "LIBERATED." THE SAME STORY ASSERTS THAT THE MPLA HAS ALSO SCORED VICTORIES ON THE EASTERN AND SOUTHERN FRONTS.

4. COMMENT. EVEN THOUGH TODAY'S COVERAGE IS RELATIVELY LIGHT, THE TONE OF THE PRAVDA STORY, AND THE REFERENCE TO MPLA MILITARY SUCCESS IN THE NORTH, POINTS TOWARD AN UPGRADED PUBLIC CAMPAIGN TO PORTRAY THE MPLA AS THE LEGITIMATE "PARTY OF THE PEOPLE" WHOSE INCREASING SUPPORT FOR NETO'S GROUP IS LEADING TO MILITARY VICTORIES OVER THE OPPOSITION FACTIONS. ALTHOUGH THE MPLA RECOGNITION DRIVE STALLED IN ADDIS ABABA, THE SOVIETS CAN BE EXPECTED TO DO WHAT THEY CAN TO KEEP STEAM IN IT BY STRESSING MPLA LEGITIMACY.

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